

Application Referral Cultural Heritage - Response

From:	Nick Booth
Recommendation:	Proposal is unacceptable.
Date Completed:	
Address:	3 LASSWADE AVENUE, SANDY BAY
Proposal:	Partial Demolition, Alterations, Extension and Front Fencing
Application No:	PLN-17-844
Assessment Officer:	Adam Smee,

Referral Officer comments:

This site is a two storey distinctive brick built residential property constructed in an restrained Queen Anne style in the early 20th century. Robust in both form and design, the building is set up and back from the road side and, due to the layout of the highway, effectively reads as dual fronted. Noted for the degree to which the building has been well preserved, its forms an impressive and commanding feature within a streetscape of more restrained but well managed group of smaller properties of the various, later periods. The building is thus individually identified for Heritage Listing whilst also forming part of the Upper Sandy Bay Heritage Precinct (SB2) as set out in the *Hobart Interim Planning Scheme 2015*.

This precinct is significant for reasons including:

1. The early subdivision pattern of the main streets enhanced by the later street additions to form a coherent precinct of high overall heritage integrity.
2. The very fine examples of housing seen throughout the precinct that represent all of the major architectural styles.
3. The consistency of housing forms and the relatively low level of intrusive elements.
4. The high visual integrity of the streetscapes and the mix of development that allows the historical layers and development of the precinct to be seen and understood.
5. The extensive group of early buildings that represent the first phase of development of the Sandy Bay Precinct.

The proposal seeks several elements of demolition including to a rear later addition, a poorly realized concrete slab to a front facing verandah, a number of mostly minor internal walls, removal of the dividing wall between the two major front bedrooms at first floor level, the removal of three seemingly non-original minor external doors, the removal of a small rear window and demolition of the rear garage.

By way of additions and alterations, the proposal then seeks approval for the erection of a new rear garage/store to the same dimensions, the erection of a large rear single storey addition plus an additional rear drying area, small works of landscaping to the rear garden, excavation works within the front garden and the footprint of the building to produce an internal lift and water pump to serve a proposed swimming pool within a single storey glazed extension within the front garden, further excavation works to the front garden to enable the erection of a partially submerged double garage accessed from Lasswade Avenue, landscaping within the front garden to produce a raised patio, new raised front fence consisting of solid masonry elements and timber slats, new front vehicular and pedestrian gates clad in metal and provision of replacement external doors, verandah timber floor and new bathroom annex to

new enlarged front bedroom created through the amalgamation of the front bedrooms into a single room.

Heritage Precinct

With regard to the impact of the proposed works to the character of the Precinct, clauses *E13.8.1 Demolition* and *E13.8.2 Buildings and Works other than Demolition* seek to ensure that development is sympathetic to those characteristics of the Precinct as set out in the description above. As such, it is considered prudent to recognise what the characteristics of the Precinct in question are and to what extent No.3 Lasswade contributes to these characteristics.

With regard to the stated characteristics as set out in the Statement of Historic Cultural Heritage Significance above, it is noted that whilst the Precinct is considered to contain architecture of various periods, it is identified as having an overall coherency and visual integrity. Importantly, the consistency of built forms, the low level of intrusive elements and the high visual integrity of streetscapes are specifically identified.

Making an examination of the Precinct, both within the immediate context of No.3 Lasswade Avenue, and the wider townscape, it is considered that one such coherent feature of the Precinct is that front gardens are generally free of development. Front elevations remain the dominant building line with gardens largely uncluttered by adhoc additions whilst garden fences appear to be modest and relatively low in height as well as being reasonably high in terms of degree of transparency. As such, an inherently traditional residential plot arrangement of low fence, followed by clear front garden, followed by main elevation is a consistent, coherent and marked characteristic.

With regard to No.3 Lasswade Avenue, it is clear that the property is slightly at odds with the general built form, due to its dominating scale, its relative set back and its orientation to the street which allows the property to be read far more 'in the round' than most. Its primary entrance is located on what could be regarded as the return elevation. However, it is considered to be a fine example of the Queen Anne style with a clear principal front façade uninterrupted by development or intrusive elements from the public realm overlooking a clear front garden with low boundary treatment. As such, it is considered that the property is wholly in step with the high visual integrity of the streetscape and overall residential built form. As such, it is therefore considered that the property is of a high quality, prominent within the street scene and is a strong contributing element to the character of the precinct.

With regard to the proposed works of demolition, it is noted that those elements shown for demolition are largely situated within the private rear garden of the site with only small works proposed to the front. Given also that the principal external demolition relates to a non-original later addition, it is considered that these works would have no impact whatsoever upon the character of the wider Precinct.

With regard to the proposed alterations and extensions, when considering what factors may result in the loss of characteristics, the associated performance criteria of *E13.8.2 Buildings and Works other than Demolition* specifically identify issues relating to design and siting of buildings, works, extensions, front fences and gates (including setback, height, form, scale and materials), and the removal of areas of landscaping between a dwelling and the street. As above, those extensions and alterations proposed within the rear garden would be almost entirely hidden from the public realm and are considered relatively modest in scale. As such, the proposed rear extensions including the drying space are considered to have no discernible impact upon the characteristics of the Precinct. However, the proposed enclosed swimming pool, garage and front boundary fencing and gates are proposed to be constructed within the front garden and thus both forward of the front building line and highly visible from the public realm. As such, these proposed structures must be subject to the above stated criteria.

It is noted that the proposed garage would be partially constructed below the height of the garden, reducing its appearance to a degree. It is also noted that the proposed glazed swimming pool enclosure would be partially glazed, reducing its visual bulk to a degree. Notwithstanding these attempts to reduce the visual impact of these developments, they would clearly represent substantial development within the front garden and forward of the front building line and therefore at odds with the general pattern of development. They would, by definition, also result in the loss of some of the existing garden and associated landscaping between the dwelling and the street. Similarly, the proposed front fencing and gates, by virtue of height and use of substantial solid elements, would also create an enclosed front garden again at odds with the general modest and low approach for front boundary treatments as described above.

With regard to the form and materials of the proposed extensions and boundary treatment, it is noted that all adopt a modernist approach, with the use of black metal cladding utilized in both the swimming pool enclosure and the front gates. It is considered that little if any reference has been had to the form and construction materials of the existing house, its grounds or the wider residential built form or pallet of materials used throughout the Precinct.

Given the characteristics of the Precinct as described, the important contribution the property makes to it, and the stated criteria set out in the planning scheme, it is considered that the proposed structures within the front parts of the site would represent development at odds with the general pattern of plot layout and siting of extensions, the built form, materials, height and retention of open garden space. Given the highly prominent position of these proposed structures and the otherwise integrity of the original dwelling, it is therefore considered that the proposed additions would have a detrimental impact upon the character of the Precinct and would therefore fail to comply with the requirements of *E13.8.2 Buildings and Works other than Demolition*.

Heritage Place

Turning to the impact of the proposal on the cultural characteristics of the site itself, as with the above, with regard to the proposed demolition, it is considered that the proposed works would represent relatively small degrees of demolition and that whilst the converting of the front upper floor bedrooms into a single master bedroom is considered unfortunate, it is not considered so detrimental or to cause a loss of cultural values to a degree to run contrary to the requirements of *E13.7.1 Demolition*.

With regard to the new works, *E13.7.2 Buildings and Works other than Demolition* requires that all works be undertaken in a sympathetic manner and designed to be subservient to the historic cultural heritage values of the place and responsive to its dominant characteristics. All of the performance criteria are relevant although particular attention is given to performance criteria P1 which identifies design, including height, scale, bulk, form, fenestration, siting, materials, colours and finishes as relevant; along with impact on a Listed Place through loss of significant streetscape elements including plants, trees, fences, walls, paths, outbuildings and other items that contribute to the significance of the Place. It is noted that the planning scheme requires that development must comply with all of the above. Also of particular relevance, P2 requires that development must be designed to be subservient and complementary to the Place through characteristics including scale and bulk, materials, built form and fenestration, setback from frontage, siting with respect to buildings, structures and listed elements, and the use of less dominant materials and colours.

With regard to the proposed alterations and additions to the rear, it is noted that the proposed rear additions and alterations are considered to be relatively minor. Through positioning and scale, the proposals remain clearly subservient and utilises the existing floorplan to create a readily understandable extension of the internal spaces. The adoption of modern architectural

form is off-set through the re-use of brick to match the existing house and small light weight glazed links retain a sense of separation between the old and the new.

With regard to the proposed front additions however, as with the requirements of *E13.8.2*, it is considered that the fundamental issue relates to the provision of additions directly onto and forward of the front and principal elevation. The elevations facing onto the roadside are considered to be of high importance and act as the prime public faces of the building and are thus finely detailed, balanced and share clear architectural features typical of the style. By proposing to site new additions directly onto and indeed in front of the front elevations within the front garden, the proposal fails to respond to the hierarchy of the built form and introduces elements which by virtue of their prominent position, would fail to be suitably subservient to the original building. Similarly, it is also considered that the use of modern architectural forms and use of materials to the extensions which fail to respond, re-interpret or be sympathetic to the inherently residential style and pallet of the original property. The proposed front fences and gates would fail to be sympathetic in design, height, form and materials with the style, period and characteristics of the building. When coupled with the associated loss of garden, it is considered that the proposal would result in development that would fail to comply with the requirements of *E13.7.2 P1* through to *P6*.

It is therefore considered that the proposed additions, extensions and proposed front boundary treatment would be entirely out of keeping with the overall character of the Precinct and its distinctive and relatively intact streetscape and the historic cultural heritage values of the Listed Place. The proposal would therefore have a detrimental visual and cultural impact upon the character of the Precinct and the Listed Place. As such it is therefore considered that the proposal does not comply with the requirements of the *Hobart Interim Planning Scheme 2015* and should therefore be refused.

Nick Booth
Heritage Officer
29 December 2017